

**SITUATION REPORT NO. 2**  
**INCIDENT NO. 2000-016**  
**DATE: March 14, 2000    TIME: 9:00 a.m.**

**TO:** Governor Edward T. Schafer  
State Capitol  
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Potential for Flooding –On March 8-9, a spring storm that began with rain and turned to snow caused extended power outages in southern North Dakota and replenished top soil moisture in southeast and east central North Dakota. Additionally, high water tables continue to cause safety- and health-related problems in south central and southeast North Dakota.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from the first report.
3. DAMAGES: Although the melt from this winter's snow activity has essentially occurred in North Dakota, flood potential continues to be a concern. Because of: replenished topsoil moisture conditions due to recent rain and snow events, continued wet subsoil conditions in many areas of the state, and flows of 150 to 300 percent of normal in streams and rivers; a significant future precipitation event could result in serious flooding within the state.

The National Weather Service (NWS) issued a March 10 Spring Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook for the Devils Lake Basin that underscored previous reports forecasting a crest of 1,446.5 feet this summer, assuming average precipitation and evaporation rates take place through August. If above normal precipitation takes place through August, the lake could reach an elevation of 1,448 feet. The lake level at Creel Bay measured 1,446.26 feet on March 13. Although the predicted lake level of 1,446.5 feet is below last summer's maximum daily average of 1,447.2 feet, thousands of acres remain inundated and flooding continues to present a hazard to area residents.

A strong low pressure system moved from the Colorado Rockies into North Dakota on March 8-9, creating dangerous winter conditions. These conditions caused extended power outages and created slippery road conditions throughout southern and eastern North Dakota. Because of hazardous conditions, the State Highway Patrol closed portions of I-29, from Fargo to Grand Forks, and I-94, from Jamestown to Fargo. NWS officials are also forecasting storm and snow conditions for North Dakota beginning late on March 14.

In McIntosh County, residents in the city of Ashley were without power for 30 hours during the March 8-9 blizzard. Gusty winds and ice downed utility poles that were in standing water. No injuries were reported.

Blizzard conditions on March 8-9 resulted in power outages and plugged roads in Dickey County, where the storm produced 1.51 inches of precipitation and wind gusts of up to 49 miles per hour (mph). Because of icy conditions, several vehicles slid into ditches. Crews from power and telephone utilities promptly restored services.

Power outages were also reported in rural Cass County. Storm conditions stranded truck drivers overnight, county officials reported.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: In addition to the last report, utility and telephone crews repaired lines downed by storm conditions during March 8-9.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: The National Weather Service will no longer issue flood outlook statements, but indicates it is in an operational mode. NWS staff will provide flood forecasts as events prescribe.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: In McIntosh County, volunteers assisted the emergency manager on door-to-door and telephone checks of residents in Ashley during a power outage that lasted 30 hours on March 8-9. Residents opened their homes to their neighbors if they had no alternative heat source.

Members of the North Dakota Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) discussed the spring flood potential during a March 10 meeting at the Minn-Kota Chapter of the American Red Cross Office in Moorhead, Minn.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), in conjunction with the North Dakota and Minnesota Divisions of Emergency Management, conducted flood preparedness seminars in the Red River of the North Valley on March 9 and 10. Discussion centered on the continuing need for communities and response organizations to be as ready as possible to deal with a flood situation caused by a significant future precipitation since winter snowmelt for the Red River Basin has essentially occurred. Participating agencies included the USACE, the NWS, VOAD, Regions V and VIII of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Minnesota and North Dakota Emergency Management, N.D. State Water Commission, the North Dakota National Guard, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Minnesota National Guard and various local emergency management teams.

As part of efforts to ensure the safety of the residents of Ashley, the city mayor made arrangements with staff at the local hospital to have elderly residents transported to a nursing home, which was heated. Hospital staff and representatives of a Meals-on-Wheel program delivered meals to senior citizens.

**FEMA-1279-DR-ND, 1999 Flooding**

The Churchs Ferry Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) buyout project continues to progress. Eleven homes have been purchased, and 29 homes have been appraised. Five more appraisals are scheduled to be completed by March 17. To date, six additional offers have been made on homes, of which four have been accepted and two are pending.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: With the exception of continuing technical support, no additional assistance has been requested.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No outside assistance has been reported at this time.
9. OTHER: Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

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Douglas C. Friez, State Director